

R E M A R K S

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-16, 19, and 20 are amended. Claims 2, 10, 17, and 18 are canceled. No new matter is introduced. Re-examination and reconsideration are requested.

In the office action, paper number (unspecified), dated July 2, 2004, (referred to hereinafter as "office action") the examiner rejected claims 1-20 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 13, 14, and 17-19 of U.S. Patent No. 6,648,428. The examiner also rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7, 8, 11-13, and 15 under obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 8-11, 17, and 18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,654,318.

The examiner rejected claims 1-15, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons stated on page 4 of the office action. The examiner rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 11-17, 19, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Inoue. While the examiner did not provide any further identifying information regarding the Inoue reference, applicants assume, for the purpose of this response and in order to avoid undue delay in prosecution, that the examiner's reference to Inoue refers to U.S. Patent No. 5,940,354, in that it is the only reference cited by applicants or by the examiner that references the name "Inoue."

Re the Claims:

Claim 1 is amended to include limitations contained in claim 2 as originally filed. The preamble of claim 1 is also amended. No new matter is added.

Claims 3-5 are amended to make them consistent with the amendments to the preamble of claim 1. No new matter is added.

The preamble of claim 6 is amended. No new matter is added.

Claim 7 is amended to include the limitations contained in claim 10 as originally filed. The preamble of claim 7 is also amended. No new matter is added.

Claims 8, 9, and 11-15 are amended to make them consistent with the amendments to the preamble of claim 7. No new matter is added.

Claim 16 is amended to include the limitations contained in claims 17 and 18 as originally filed. The preamble of claim 16 is also amended. No new matter is added.

Claims 19 and 20 are amended to make them consistent with the amendments to the preamble of claim 16. No new matter is added.

Re the Double Patenting Rejections:

The examiner rejected claims 1-20 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 13, 14, and 17-19 of U.S. Patent No. 6,648,428. The examiner also rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7, 8, 11-13, and 15 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 8-11, 17, and 18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,654,318.

In response, applicants submit herewith two properly-executed terminal disclaimers and the required fees. The terminal disclaimers should remove the obviousness-type double patenting rejections.

Re the Section 112, Second Paragraph, Rejections:

The examiner rejected claims 1-15, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons set forth on page 4 of the office action. In response, applicants have amended the preambles of the pending claims. It is believed that the amendments to the preambles address the examiner's concerns.

Applicants note, however, that the issued claims of the parent application, i.e., U.S. Patent No. 6,648,428, contain language that is identical to the language that is now objected-to by the examiner under Section 112. In addition, certain of the claims in this continuation application contained the

objected-to language while they were pending in the parent application, and were not objected to there. Consequently, applicants regard the objected-to language as *prima-facie* definite under Section 112. However, rather than possibly delay prosecution by traversing the examiner's rejections, applicants have amended the preambles of the pending claims in an attempt to address the examiner's concerns.

Re the Anticipation Rejections:

The examiner rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 11-17, 19, and 20 under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by Inoue. However, these rejections are rendered moot by the amendments to the claims. Consequently, the examiner's rejections will not be addressed in further detail herein.

However, with respect to the amended claims, amended claim 1 is believed to be allowable in that it contains substantially the same subject matter as claim 2, which was not rejected by the examiner under Section 102. Therefore, claim 1, and the claims depending therefrom (i.e., claims 3-5) are believed to be allowable.

Amended claim 7 is believed to be allowable in that it contains substantially the same subject matter as claim 10, which was not rejected under Section 102. Therefore, claim 7, and the claims depending therefrom (i.e., claims 8, 9, and 11-15) are believed to be allowable.

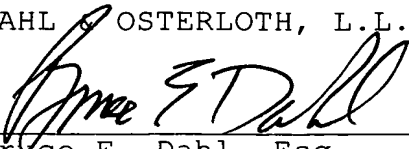
Amended claim 16 is believed to be allowable in that it contains substantially the same subject matter as claim 18, which was not rejected under Section 102. Claim 16, and the claims depending therefrom (i.e., claims 19 and 20) are believed to be allowable.

Applicants believe that all of the claims pending in this patent application are allowable and that all other issues raised by the examiner have been rectified. Therefore, applicants respectfully request the examiner to reconsider the rejections

and to grant an early allowance. If any questions or issues remain to be resolved, the examiner is requested to contact the applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 9-27-04